

NEWS ITEM

USAID-Funded Conference Shares Experiences on Implementation of Kazakhstan's Land Code Law

From September 28-29, 2005, the USAID Land Tenure Project held a conference entitled "Land Code: Past and Future." The conference was attended by representatives from Kazakhstan's Land Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Departments for Land Resources, NGOs, legal aid offices and international organizations.

The conference focused on the Land Code, adopted by the Government of Kazakhstan (GOK) in 2003. The Code had special interim provisions requiring that all conditional land share lease and land-plot sublease contracts be canceled by January 2005. The conditional land shareholders had three choices:

- To lease land from the government and cultivate it themselves,
- To buy the land, or
- To invest their conditional land shares or land plots as share in a bigger agricultural enterprises.



Conference participants work on the recommendations to the GOK on the land reform implementation process.

Photo by USAID/CAR

All land that did not meet these three criteria was to be returned to the GOK and included into the Government Land Fund. Following the Land Code provision, as of January 2005, all conditional land share leases and land plot subleases were cancelled. However, since almost 50,000 conditional land shareholders were unable to finish the registration procedures, the deadline was extended until 2006.

USAID supported the implementation of the Land Code through the Land Tenure Project, implemented by the Association for Rural Development. The project established eight legal aid offices throughout Kazakhstan that have provided farmers with legal consultations and conducted legal education campaigns. Such services help farmers to understand and comply with the options available to them under the interim provisions of the Land Code. Since 2003, legal aid offices have provided direct legal assistance and information to over 25,000 farmers in eight regions of Kazakhstan.

At the conference, representatives from the Land Tenure Project presented the findings of the recent assessment of the implementation of the interim provisions of the Land Code, and the results of the work conducted by the legal aid offices. Representatives of the legal aid offices and regional land agencies shared their experiences on how the interim provisions were implemented in their respective regions. The participants prepared recommendations to the GOK on the land reform implementation process.